

his wit and his resoun, and al his debonaire lif espirituel, that sholde kepen his soule. Certes, it bynymeth eek Goddes due lordshipe, and that is mannes soule, & the love of his neighbores. It stryvet eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym the quiete of his herte, and subverteth his soule.

Of ire comen thise stynkyng engendures: first hate, that is oold wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath loved ful longe. And thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighbore, in body or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughter. And understonde wel, that homycide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spirituel, and som is bodily.

SPIRITUEL manslaughter is in sixe thynges. first, by hate; as Seint John seith: He that hateth his brother is homycide. Homycide is eek by bakbitynge; of whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon: that They han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neighbores. for soothly, as wikke is to bynyme his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in yevynge of wikked conseil by fraude; as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful customs and taillages. Of whiche seith Salomon: Lecoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the cruel lordshipes, in withholdynge or abreggyng of the shepe, or the hyre, or of the wages of servaunts, or elles in usure or in withdrawynge of the almesse of poure folk. for which the wise man seith: fedeth hym that almoost dyeth for hunger. for soothly, but if thou feede hym, thou sleest hym; and alle thise been deedly synnes. Bodily manslaughter is, whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in oother manere; as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yvest hym conseil to sleen a man.

MANSLAUGHTRE in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe; right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth. But lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, but for kepyng of rightwisnesse. Another homycide is, that is doon for necessity, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, & that he ne may noon ootherwise escape from his owene deeth. But certainly, if he may escape withouten manslaughter of his adversarie, & sleeth hym, he dooth synne, and he shal bere penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, shete an arwe or caste a stoon with which he sleeth a man, he is homycide. Eek if a womman by negligence overlyeth

hir child in hir slepyng, it is homycide and deedly synne. Eek whan man destourbieth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman outhere bareyne by drynkynge venenouse herbes, thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes wilfully, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire secree places to slee the child; or elles dooth unkyndely synne, by which man or womman shedeth hire nature in manere or in place theras a child may nat be conceived; or elles, if a woman have conceyved and hurt herself, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of wommen that morden hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homycide. Homycide is eek if a man approcheth to a womman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the child is perished, or elles smyteth a womman wityngly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle thise been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

ET comen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thought & in dede; as he that arreteth upon God, or blameth God, of thyng of which he is hymself gilty; or despiseth God and alle his halwes, as doon thise cursede hardours in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they, whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of God and of his halwes. Also, whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter. Thilke synne is so greet, that unneth may it been releessed, but that the mercy of God passeth alle his werkes; it is so greet, and he so benigne.

THANNE comth of ire, attraynng; whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his synne, thanne wole he be angry and answeren hoerly and angrily, and defenden or excuse his synne by unstedfastnesse of his flessch; or elles he dide it for to holde compaignye with his felawes; or elles, he seith, the fend enticed hym; or elles he dide it for his youthe; or elles his compleccioun is so corageous, that he may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certain age; or elles, he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse of his auncestres; and semblable thynges. Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in hir synnes, that they ne wol nat deliveren hemself, for soothly, no wight that excuseth hym wilfully of his synne may nat been delivered of his synne, til that he mekely biknoweth his synne.

AFTER this, thanne cometh sweryng; that is expres agayn the comendement of God; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of ire. God seith: Thou shalt nat take the name of thy Lord God in veyn.

or in ydel. Also oure Lord Ihesu Crist seith, by the word of Seint Mathew: Nolite jurare omnino: Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere; neither by hevene, for it is Goddes trene; ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet; ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng; ne be thyne heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whit ne blak. But swereth by youre word, Ye, ye, and Nay, may; and what that is moore, it is of yvel, and what that is moore, it is of yvel, seith Crist. for Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully, in dismembryng of Crist by soule, herte, bones, & body. for certes, it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede Jewesne dismembred nat ynough the precious persone of Crist, but ye disembre hym moore. And if so be that the lawe comelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of God in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, quarto capitulo: Jurabis in veritate, in iudicio et in justicia: thou shalt kepe the condicions; thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse. This is to seyn, thou shalt swere soothly; for every lesynge is agayns Crist; for Crist is veray trouthe. And thynk wel this, that is every greet swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whil he useth swich unleveful sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in doom, whan thou art constreyned by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. Eek thou shalt nat swere for envye, ne for favour, ne for meede, but for rightwisnesse; & for declaracioun of it, to the worship of God and helpynge of thyne evene Cristene. And therfore, every man that taketh Goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on hym the name of Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth agayns Cristes lyvyng and his techynge, alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

MOOKE eek what seint Peter seith, Actuum quarto capitulo: Non est aliud nomen sub celo, etc. Ther mys noon oother name, seith Seint Peter, under hevene, yeven to men, in which they mowe be saved. That is to seyn, but the name of Ihesu Crist. Take kepe eek how that the precious name of Crist, as seith Seint Paul ad Philipenses secundo: In nomine Ihesu, etc.: that In the name of Ihesu every knece of hevenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle, sholden bowe. for it is so heigh and so worshipful that the cursede feend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren it ymempned. Thanne semeth it, that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise hym moore booldely than dide the cursede Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he heereth his name.

NOW certes, sith that sweryng, but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly deffended, muche worse is forsweryng falsly, and yet nedeless.

WHAT seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng, and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that, of verray usage, ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw? Certes, it is horrible synne. Sweryng so deyntly, withoute avysement, is eek a synne. But lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens, in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulderboon of a sheepe. I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnable, agayns Crist and al the feith of hooly chirche.

WHAT seye we of hem that bileeven in divynailles, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dores, or crakyng of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wrecchednesse? Certes, al this thyng is deffended by God, and by al hooly chirche, for which they been acursed til they come to amendement, that on swich filthe setten hire bileeve. Charnes for woundes or madie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk sholden yeve the moore feith and reverence to his name. Now wol I speken of lesynges, which generally is fals signyficacioun of word, in entente to deceyven his evene cristene. Some lesynge is, of which ther comth noon avantage to no wight; and some lesynge turneth to the ese and profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. Another lesynge is for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesynge comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale, & peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesynge comth for he wole sustene his word; & som lesynge comth of recchelesnesse, withouten avisement; and semblable thynges.

WHAT us now touche the vice of flaterynge, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for covetise. flaterie is generally wrongful preisyng. flateres been the develes norices, that norissen his children with milk of losengerie. forsothe, Salomon seith: that flaterie is wors than detraccioun. for somtyme detraccioun maketh an hauteyn man be the moore humble, for he dredeth detraccioun; but certes, flaterie, that maketh a man to enchauncen his herte and his con-